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THE FAIRY-TALE ELEMENT IN THE BIBLE.

THE Old Testament is distinguished among the religious books of the world by its soberness, which manifests itself in an obvious absence of fairy-tales. But their absence is apparent only, not real. They are not absolutely missing, but have been introduced either incidentally or in the altered form of stories in which the fairy-tale element has been obliterated. This holds true in the Scriptures, of all folklore. Thus, the only fable which we find in the books of the Old Testament is the story of the trees that elected the bramble as their king, told in Judges ix. 8-15. The tale proves that the authors of the Bible were not entirely unfamiliar with fables, though they scorned to use them. The final redactors were in their way the rationalists and freethinkers of the age, who mercilessly elided everything fantastic and visionary. They admitted, it is true, visions and prophecies, but these mystic notions were commonly accepted at that time and were adapted in the Hebrew scriptures to a rigorous and iconoclastic monotheism.

There are stories in the Bible which can be traced to the fairy-tales of Egypt and of Chaldæa, but in all such cases the polytheistic confusion of paganism was transformed into simple narratives, which were quite credible to the monotheists of that age.

BABYLONIAN COSMOGONY.

By far the most important fairy-tale in the Bible is the hexameron, or the story of the creation of the world in six days, which has been rationalised almost beyond recognition from a polytheistic cosmogony into a monotheistic genesis. It is an ancient myth (for "myth" is the name of a fairy-tale which refers to religious sub-

jects), and its purpose as well as its entire mode of narration has been so radically altered by the Hebrew redactor that no one would think of seeking the source of the hexaëmeron in the old Marduk myth if the evidences were not very positive and without possibility of contradiction.

One of the most important evidences of the historical connexion between the first chapter of Genesis and the Babylonian Marduk myth is the use of the three words *tehom*, *tohu*, and *bohu*.

The word *tehom* is always used without an article, which indicates that it is a name. It signifies the watery deep, which was supposed to lie at the bottom of the world, and is represented by Babylonian mythologists as Tiamat,¹ the big dragon split in twain by the god Bel Merodach, an act by which he divided the watery chaos of the deep into an ocean beneath the earth and another one above the firmament. Dillmann says of the Hebrew word *tehom*:

"It corresponds formally and materially to the Tiamat of the Assyrio-Babylonian legend, conceived of in that legend as a mythological monster."—*Gen.*, Eng. trans., I., p. 58.

The phrase *Tohu va Bohu* is translated in our Bibles, and has been explained by Hebrew scholars to mean, "void and without form." It is the Hebrew term for Chaos, and it is probable that the word *Bohu* (like *Tehom*) is not Hebrew but Chaldaean. Both names, Tauthē² and Baau (Báav), are mentioned by Greek writers as monsters of the deep in Chaldaean mythology.³

Damascius, who lived in the sixth century of our era, tells the Babylonian story of the creation as follows:⁴

"The Babylonians, like the rest of the barbarians, pass over in silence the one principle of the universe. They constitute two, Tauthē and Apason,⁵ making Apason the husband of Tauthē and calling her the mother of the gods. From them proceeds an only begotten son, Moomis,⁶ which I conceive is no other than the in-

¹ *Te-hom = ti-'am.*

² The name is transcribed *Tavθέ* by Damascius, and *Θαυρέ* by Berosus.

³ Cf. Philo Byblius. See Dillmann, *Genesis*, Eng. trans., Edinburgh, 1897, I., pp. 37 and 58.

⁴ *De prim. princip.* 125. P. 384. Edition Kopp.

⁵ Ασπασών is the Babylonian *Apsa*, the consort of Tiamat.

⁶ Μωμίς is the Babylonian *Mummu*.

telligible world produced by two principles. From them also other progeny is derived, Lakhe and Lakhos; and then a third one, Kisare and Assoros, from which last proceed Anos, Illinos, and Aos. Of Aos and Dauke is born a son called Belos, who, as they say, is the creator of the world."

The main god of the Babylonians of later days was Bel Mero-dach, whom Damascius calls Belos. He belonged to the younger generation of the gods, as Zeus did among the Greek deities, and his claim to supremacy is based on the story of his heroic deeds, as told by his special worshippers. The real cause of his rise, however, must have been due to the fact that his worshippers gained the supremacy in the country and had him recognised as the supreme deity. The other older gods became his vassals, and those vague personifications of aboriginal principles which human imagination pictured as huge and awful beings were supposed to represent the raw material from which the world originated. The deities called Lakhe and Lakhos by Damascius are called Luhmu and Lahamu¹ in Babylonian inscriptions. Their significance can no longer be determined, but we must assume that their cult was not limited to Babylonia. A man as conservative and cautious as Prof. A. H. Sayce, says:

"At all events, Lakme (that is Lahamu) seems to be the name of a Philistine in 1st Chronicles, chapter xx., verse 5.² And Bethlehem is best explained as the house of Lakhem [viz., Lahamu] like Bethdagon, the house of Dagon, and Be-thanoth, the house of Anat."

Whether true or not, the wide dissemination of the Babylonian religion over all Western Asia may be accepted as an established fact.

An important account of the Babylonian creation story by Berossus, a Babylonian priest and a contemporary of Alexander the Great, is preserved by Eusebius, who owes his knowledge of it to Alexander Polyhistor. It is to be regretted that the extracts are not made with impartiality, for the report is quoted for the sole purpose of ridiculing the Babylonian religion. Eusebius says:

¹ The *h* *Luhmu* and *Lahamu* is also transcribed *ch* by German scholars and was presumably audible like the German *ch* in *ach*.

² Lahmi, the brother of Goliath, the Gittite.

"Long ago, so he (Berosus) says, the universe was darkness and water wherein originated marvellous beings of monstrous shape. There were men with two wings, some with four wings and two faces, some having one body and two heads, the one male, the other female, and also of double sex, male and female. There were further men with goats' legs and horns, or horses' feet, or shaped like horses behind and like men in front, of the shape of hippocentaurs. Then there were bulls with human heads, dogs with four bodies ending in fishtails, horses and men with dogs' heads and other monsters having the heads and bodies of horses ending in fishtails, and many more monsters having the mixed shapes of several animals. There were also fishes and vermin and serpents and all kinds of various shapes. Their pictures can still be seen in the temple of Bel among the votive gifts. The ruler of them all was the female Omorka,¹ which is in Chaldaean "Thamte," and in Greek 'the ocean' (*θάλασσα*), of the same numeral value as 'the moon' (*σελήνη*).² Now Bel came finding the world in this condition and he divided this female (monster) in her midst, making of the one half the earth, of the other half the heaven, and destroyed all the beasts which belonged to her.

"This tale, according to him (Berosus), is meant to be an allegorical account of natural processes: The Universe was once a fluid (chaos) and such monsters as described above had originated therein; but Bel, who is the Greek Zeus, split the darkness in the middle and thereby divided it into earth and heaven, thus instituting the order of the universe. The monsters, however, unable to endure the power of the light, perished.

"When Bel beheld the earth without inhabitants and incapable of bringing forth fruit, he commanded one of the gods to cut off his (i. e., Bel's) head and mingle the dripping blood with the earth, thus to form men and animals that should be able to endure the air. Bel also fabricated the stars, the sun, the moon, and the five planets."

Eusebius dwells with special emphasis on the incident of Bel's decapitation. He repeats the story twice, stating the second time that Bel cut off his own head. He says:

"And this is on Alexander Polyhistor's authority as actually related by Berosus: 'This god (Bel) is reported to have cut off his head. Then the other gods are said to have mixed his blood with the earth and formed men, who on this account are possessed of reason and are partakers of divine understanding.'"

¹ *Ormoka* ('Ορμόκα) is obviously not Chaldaean and must be Aramaean, as which it has been identified with אֶמְרָקָא or better אֶמְרָקָאֵה (*om arkaje*) which means "mother of the deep."

² The mystical tendency of the time found expression in the identification of words that had the same numerical value, a method which was of course foreign to the ancient Babylonians.

The passage is important, although, being at third hand and having been quoted for the purpose of exposing the myth to ridicule, it must have suffered considerably.

THE CUNEIFORM TABLETS OF THE MARDUK MYTH.

Happily Mr. George Smith discovered among the cuneiform treasures of the British Museum a series of tablets of the Royal Library of Nineveh which contain an original report of the Babylonian creation story. They have been frequently commented upon and translated.¹ In addition to these tablets, fragments of other inscriptions have been discovered which treat of the same subject in a different way. It is therefore by no means necessary that these tablets contain the very same myth to which Berosus and Damascius refer. It is one version only among several of the Babylonian Cosmogony, though having been deemed worthy of being preserved in the Royal Library, it was probably the most authoritative of all.

The meter of the poem is that of the usual verse of Assyrio-Babylonian poetry, each verse consisting of two lines, each line of two half lines, and each half line having two beats.

Here is a translation of the poem mainly on the authority of Professor Zimmern :²

The First Tablet.

- 1. Of yore, when above the heaven was not yet known,
When below the earth no name as yet bore,
When still Apsû (the deep) the begetter of both,
And Mummu³ Tiâmat (the abyssmal chaos), who bore them both,

¹ George Smith, *Chaldean Genesis*, p. 62 ff.; Oppert, in Ledrain's *Histoire d'Israël*, Vol. I., pp. 411 ff.; Lenormant, *Les origines de l'hist.*, pp. 494 ff.; Schrader, KAT²., pp. 1 ff.; Sayce, Hibbert Lectures, pp. 384 ff.; in the *Records of the Past*, new series, Vol. I., pp. 133 ff.; Jensen, *Kosmologie*, pp. 261–364; Pinches, *Babylonian and Oriental Record*, Vol. IV., pp. 25–33.

² Published in Gunkel's *Schöpfung und Chaos*. The numbers indicate the lines of the cuneiform inscription as counted by Assyriologists.

Words in brackets indicate passages which are destroyed in the original and have been supplied from the context; words in parenthesis are explanatory additions.

³ The meaning of Mummu is still doubtful. Zimmern explains it as *abyss*. It is peculiar that the same word serves as the name of the son of Apsû and Tiâmat who is mentioned later on.

5. Their waters in one together were pouring,
 When fields were untilled, and pastures ungrown,
 Of yore when of the gods no one had yet risen,
 No name was recorded, no destiny [fixed],
 Then were created the gods [. . .]
10. Luhmu and Lahamu came forth [. . .]
 Æons developed [.]
 Ansar and Kisar were created . . .
 Long were the days; extended [was the time]
 The gods (Anu, Bel, and Ea) were born
15. Ansar and Kisar [gave them birth].

Here the tablet is broken. There is a gap of sixty to seventy lines, which probably told of the creation of the light, and it seems that the pieces of the following fragments belong here, being a conversation between Apsû and Tiâmat, viz., the Aboriginal Deep and Abyssmal Chaos, in which their son Mummu takes part. The first four lines are greatly mutilated.

5. Ap[sû] opened his mouth [and spake] . . .
 To [Tiâmat], to the glorious one:
 "So long as their plan [.] . . .
 [.]
 Frustrate will I their plan [.]
10. Lamentations shall issue, Wailings [shall be heard]."
 [.] Tiâmat [heard this]
 . . . shrieking [she exclaimed] [.]
 [.] [.]
 [A curse] she uttered [.]
15. "Why shall we [suffer the outrage]? [.]
 [Their undertaking] shall be impeded."
 [Then an]swered god Mummu Apsû his father:
 "[I shall be] willing the council [to follow].
 [Frustrated be] their plan
20. [The light] shall be darkened, as night shall it [be again]."
 [Listening was] Apsû, joyful grew [his] face,
 Evil they were planning against the gods [.]

Here four lines are mutilated. Then follows a gap of about fifteen to twenty lines, and here is probably the place where the description of Tiâmat's rebellion must be inserted,—a passage

which is three times repeated in the fragments of the poem in our possession :

- Tiāmat, mother of the gods, rebelled against them,
 A band she collected, wrathfully raging.
 To her were turning the crowd of deities,
 The Æons, by her begotten, came to her assistance.
5. The [daylight] they cursed, they followed Tiāmat,
 Furious, planning evil, restless day and night;
 Ready to fight, raging and raving,
 They banded together, they began the combat.
 The mother of the deep, the creator of the universe,
10. She added victory-giving weapons, creating enormous serpents,
 With pointed fangs, relentless in attacking;
 With venom as with blood she filled their bodies.
 Fierce venomous vipers she decked with horror,
 She endowed them with power to awe, high she made them [rise];
15. "Their mere appearance shall [frighten]
 Their bodies shall swell to make invulnerable their breasts!"
 She created a viper, a fierce serpent, a Lahamu(?),¹
 A Great Day,² a mad dog, a serpent-man,
 A Pregnant-Days,¹ a fish-man, and a ram,
20. Carrying relentless weapons, not afraid of battle,
 Of haughty mind, invincible to the enemy.
- And further, having these eleven, formed in such a way,
 And the gods, her sons, having called together,
 She raised Kingu, and made him great in their midst:
25. "The army to lead, that be thy mission!
 'Lift arms!' command thou at the commencement of battle!"
 To be the first in combat, to be the highest in victory,
 She laid in his hand. She placed him on the throne:
 "Spells spake I for thee! I raised thee from among the gods,
30. I gave unto thee lordship over the gods altogether;
 High shalt thou be, thou my sole consort;
 Great shall be thy name over [the whole universe]!"

¹ Lahamu is the same word as that for the goddess mentioned above; but the name is here apparently used in a different significance and may have no connexion with the former. It may stand for a being that has the same power or quality of Lahamu, the etymology of which word is not yet determined. Assyriologists (so far as I know) do not give any explanation of the difficulty.

² Great-Day and Pregnant Days are the names of monsters also mentioned in other passages.

She gave him the destiny tablets, placed them on his breast:
 "Thy decision be valid, firm stand behests of thy mouth!"
 35. When Kingu was installed, and had obtained divinity,
 She ordained for the gods, for her sons, their destinies:
 "When you open your mouths, you shall quench the fire,
 The lofty one of Kidmuri,¹ the glow shall extinguish."

[END OF THE FIRST TABLET.]

Second Tablet.

The beginning of the second tablet must have contained Ansar's call to arms against Tiamat, which is first sent to Anu and Ea. Both gods refuse, and Ansar now addresses Marduk, repeating a description of Tiamat's rebellion in the same words as those of the last fragment of the first tablet. He says:

"Tiamat, our mother, rebelled against us,
 A band she collected, wrathfully raging."

From here the tablet reads as above, to and including the line:

"The lofty one of Kidmuri the glow shall extinguish."

The tablet continues:

[When Marduk heard this, his heart was] very sorrowful,
 he bit his lip,
 angry was his soul,
 his shout [was heard far]
 [he thought of] giving battle.
 [Then he spake to his father:] "Be not afflicted!
 [The mother] of the deep thou wilt master,
 [Tiamat] I shall meet.

Here follow a number of mutilated lines among which only single words can be read at the end of the verses, such as "of the fate," "of his heart," "approach," "be . . . comforted." "of his father," "Ansar," "filled with wailing," "was removed," "the word of thy lip," "of thy heart," "will lead thee out," make bright," "O, thou," "make bright," "O, thou," "of sensible mind," "later on." The tablet continues:

Marduk minded the speech of his father,
 In the excitement of his heart he spake to his father :

¹ Obviously Kingu is meant.

- "O, Lord of the gods, appointer of the lot (?)¹ of the great gods,
 25. If truly I shall be your avenger,
 Tiamat to vanquish, you to save,
 Prepare a repast, plentiful be the dinner of destiny.
 In Ubsugina² altogether . . . joyfully ye shall enter !
 With my mouth, even like you, then shall I give my decision.
 30. Not shall be altered whatever I create,
 Not shall be unmade, not invalid, the word of my lip !"

(END OF THE SECOND TABLET.)

Third Tablet.

- Ansar his mouth thereupon opened,
 [To GA-GA], his [messenger], he addressed the word :
 "GA-GA, thou messenger, who pleasest my heart,
 To Luhmu and Lahamu I shall despatch thee,
 5. The command of my heart shalt thou readily listen to,
 thy before thee.
 [Invite to the repast] the gods all together,
 At the table they may [seat themselves] to enjoy the meal,
 They may eat bread, they may mix wine,
 10. They may mount their seats to determine the destiny !
 [Avaunt thou], O, GA-GA, present thyself to them,
 The command which I gave thee make known to them :
 'Ansar, your son, has despatched me,
 The command of his heart he made me listen to :
 15. Tiamat, our mother, has rebelled against us,
 A band she collected wrathfully raging,' etc.

From here, the tablet reads as above, to and including the line :

'The lofty one of Kidmuri the glow shall extinguish.'

I despatched Anu, but he was not willing to meet her,
 Nugimmud (the god Ea) was afraid and drew back.

¹ The meaning of this word is doubtful. It seems to mean "destiny" or "lot," and should then be interpreted as "allotter," i. e., "one who determines the destiny of," "one who decides the lot of," and in this sense we translate "appointer of the lot." Professor Zimmern translates it *offspring*, or *sprig*. The meaning of "great gods" seems to be the aboriginal powers, Apsu and Tiamat, or Luhmu and Lahamu.

² Ubsugina, the Olympus of the Babylonian gods, is the place in which they hold their meetings. See Jensen, *Kosmologie*, pages 238-243. Zimmern, *Zeitschrift für alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, Vol. XI., 1891, p. 261. Repasts were held in connexion with council meetings and were called dinners of destiny.

55. I called upon Marduk the councillor of the gods, your sons,
 Tiamat to meet, urged him his heart,
 He opened his mouth and he spake to me :
 ' If truly I your avenger shall be,
 Tiamat to conquer, you to save
 60. Then prepare a repast, make plentiful the destiny dinner,
 In Ubsugina all together joyfully ye shall enter !
 With my mouth, even like you,¹ shall I give my decision ;
 Not shall be altered whatever I create,
 Not shall be unmade, not invalid, the word of my lip !'
 65. Therefore hasten and determine for him quickly his destiny,
 That he go forth and meet your powerful enemy !"
 Then GA-GA went and completed his way,
 To Luhmu and Lahamu to the gods, to his parents,
 Prostrate he kissed the ground at their feet,
 70. Bowing he rose, and then spake he to them :
 "Ansar, your son, hath despatched me,
 The command of his heart he made me listen to :
 Tiamat, our mother, has rebelled against us,
 etc., to the line :

That he go forth and meet your powerful enemy."

125. Luhmu and Lahamu were listening and they lamented [bitterly].
 The celestials all together were woefully wailing :
 " How foolish are the Æons ! they will bring themselves into durance,
 Not can we comprehend Tiamat's [undertaking]."
 Then they met and went . . .
 130. The great gods all together they determined the [destiny],
 They entered into the presence of Ansar, and filled [the hall],
 They crowded together in council . . .
 They sat down to the table, and enjoyed [the repast],
 Bread they ate, they mixed wine,
 135. Of sweet must they partook,
 They drank mead, they strengthened their bodies,
 Very much . . . they mounted their seats,
 For Marduk, their avenger, his destiny to determine.

(END OF TABLET THREE.)

Tablet Four.

Then they placed him upon the royal throne,
 In the presence of his fathers, he sat down as their sovereign.

¹Viz., like Ansar.

- " Be thou honored among the great gods ;
 Thy lot is without equal, thy name is Anu.
 5. Marduk, be thou honored among the great gods,
 Thy lot is unrivalled, thy name is Anu.
 From this day forward be valid thy command,
 Promotion and degradation be placed in thy hand !
 Thy word be established, unbroken thy command,
 10. None of the gods trespass upon thy province !
 .¹
 O, Marduk, since thou our avenger wilt be,
 We give thee sovereignty over the hosts of the universe.
 15. When thou sittest in council, thy word be exalted,
 Thy arms be unbroken, may they strike thine enemy.
 O, Lord ! Who trusteth in thee, his life thou wilt spare ;
 But the gods who planned evil, pour forth their lives."
 They placed in their midst some kind of vesture,
 20. To Marduk, their first-born, they spake thus :
 " Thy lot, O Lord, surpasses that of the gods :
 Uncreation and creation command thou and be it done.
 Upon the opening of thy mouth the vesture shall disappear,
 Command again, and the vesture shall reappear ! "
 25. Then he commanded with his mouth and the vesture disappeared
 He commanded again, and the vesture reappeared.
 When such power of his word the gods, his fathers, saw,
 They greeted him joyfully : " Marduk be King."
 They presented him a scepter, a throne and a ring,
 30. They gave him a weapon that had not its equal to strike the enemy
 " Forward ! O thou, who would cut off the life of Tiamat,
 Let the wind bear away her blood into hiding-places ! "
 Thus the Lord determined the lot of his father-gods,
 A path of salvation and bliss they made him discover.
 35. He made him a bow, prepared it as weapon,
 He armed himself with a falchion,² fastening it [to his belt] ;

¹ The two lines 11 and 12 present special difficulties. Zimmern refers to Belzar in BSS 2, 255 and translates :

'Tis decoration for which all yearn in their temples the gods,
 May they be lacking it, in thy place be it rich.

² The falchion is the peculiar sickle-sword which we see in illustrations of Marduk. Though it was not a weapon commonly used in antiquity, its shape has been preserved in the legends of ancient Greece where Perseus is still represented

- He took the divine thunder-bolt,¹ and made his right hand grasp it,
 Bow and quiver he hung at his side.
 He caused lightning to precede his steps,
40. The interior of which he filled with shooting flames.
 He had a net, made to catch the monster of the deep,
 The four winds he placed round, lest she should escape,
 The South wind, the North wind, the East wind, the West wind,
 He bade watch the net, father Anu's gift.
45. He created a hurricane, a storm and a tempest,
 The four winds, the seven gales, a whirlwind, a cyclone,
 He let loose the winds, which he had created, all seven,
 To confound Tiamat, as his lead they followed.
 The lord lifted up the storm, his mighty weapon,
50. The chariot unrivalled, the tremendous, he bestrode.
 Stepping firmly, four steeds to the chariot he harnessed,
 [Horses] unsparing, courageous and swift ;
 [With pointed] teeth, filled with poison,
 [.] able to upset,
 [On the right] ready for battle
55. On the left [fit to] clear the field before him,
 57. awe-inspiring,
 With a dread which overthrows.
 Straight on he marched, he completed his way,
60. To the place of Tiamat . . . he turned his face,
 In his lip . . . holding
 A poisonous herb . . . clinching in his fingers.
- In that hour they looked up to him, the gods looked up to him,
 His father-gods looked up to him, the gods looked up to him.
65. Thus the Lord approached, seeking battle with Tiamat,
 Searching for the conquest of Kingu, her husband.
 When the latter beheld him, his designs were confounded,
 His understanding was benumbed, his plans were perplexed.
 When the gods, his assistants, who stood at his side,
70. Saw their leader [wavering], their eyes grew obscure.
 But Tiamat [resisted], she turned not her neck,

as killing the Medusa with a falchion,—one of the evidences that the Perseus legend is a version of the Marduk myth, Medusa being Tiamat and Perseus, Bel-Mero-dach.

¹ The divine thunder-bolt is the other peculiar weapon which we find in Mero-dach's hand; it is noteworthy that the same emblem is found in Jupiter's hands, where it is sometimes plainly indicated to represent lightning.

- With hostile lip she [announced] opposition :
 " With thee, O Lord, the gods take up battle,
 [Where] now they are assembled, must be thy place ! "¹
75. The Lord lifted up the storm, his powerful weapon,
 Tiamat for her behavior upbraided he thus :
 [" Below] thou wast powerful, and above thou wast great,
 But thy hea[rt impelled thee] to begin the war.
 [The Æons thou mad'st leave] their fathers to join thee ;
80. [Round thee thou mad'st] them [rally], thou rebelled'st against us
 [Kin]gu [thou mad'st] thy consort . . .
 Thou gav'st to him divine power.
 [e]vil thou planned'st,
 [Upon the g]ods, my fathers, injury thou inflicted'st.
85. [Therefore fet]tered be thy army, broken be thy weapons ;
 Give battle ! Myself and thou will fight together ! "
- Tiamat, when she heard these things,
 Was greatly perplexed, her reason she lost.
 Tiamat shrieked, impetuously rising,
90. In her deepest viscera all her limbs were shaking.
 She uttered a spell, she pronounced a formula,
 The gods of the battle let resound their weapons.
 Then Tiamet met with Marduk, the councillor of the gods,
 They rushed to combat, they approached to do battle.
95. Then Bel spread his net to entrap her,
 The hurricane from behind he let loose on her.
 But when she opened her maw, Tiamat [the formidable]
 He made enter into her the hurricane, and keep open her mouth.
 With such terrible gales her body he filled,
100. That her consciousness waned, her jaws were agape.
 Then he seized his falchion, thrust it into her body,
 Cut to pieces her entrails, divided her interior ;
 He vanquished her, put an end to her life,
 Her carcass he threw down, he placed himself upon it.
105. And thus he had conquered Tiamat, the leader,
 Had dispersed her forces, her troops he had scattered ;
 The gods, her assistants, which stood at her side,

¹ These two lines, according to Zimmern, are spoken by Tiamat, who declares that she with the gods that fight on her side will be ready to take up the battle. Professor Sayce interprets the lines to mean that the gods that join Bel in battle, gather around the place where he stands.

- Were trembling and fearful, they turned themselves backward,
 They fled away, their lives to save,
110. [But bo]nds ensnared them, there was no escape:
 He took them captive, he broke their weapons,
 In the net they lay, they sat in its meshes;
 They filled all round the world with wailing,
 They received his punishment, and were confined in a dungeon.
115. Also the eleven, her creatures, by her cruelty fashioned,
 A band of monsters, which stood at her side,
 He placed in fetters, [he tied] their hands,
 And their resistance he [tr]od under foot.
- But Kingu who had pow[er] over] them [all],
 120. Him he vanquished and dealt with as with the [other] gods.
 He snatched from him the destiny tablets [which hung on] his br[east]
 He sealed them with his seal, he hung them on his br[east].
 When thus his adversary he had vanquished and conquered,
 The proud opponent he had brought to [shame],
125. Ansar's victory over the fiends he thus completed,
 Nugimmud's (Ea's) aim he attained the valliant Marduk,
 Then the conquered gods he bound fast in their fetter,
 And he turned back to Tiamat, the conquered one,
 He trod under foot the body of Tiamat,
130. With ruthless, merciless weapon he split open her cranium,
 He severed and opened the arteries of her blood,
 And commanded the North wind to take it to hiding-places.
 His fathers beheld this, they rejoiced and were shouting,
 Offered gifts of peace, and brought them to him.
135. Then the Lord was appeased when beholding the carcass,
 . . . [he bethought himself] to make an artistic creation.
 He cut her in twain (as if she were twins¹);
 One half he took, and made of it the roof of heaven,
 He placed there a bar, he stationed there guardians,
140. To let not her waters escape he enjoined upon them.
 The sky he formed to match the Under World,
 Opposed to the deep, he made Nugimmud's (i. e., god Ea's) dwelling,
 Then the Lord measured the dimensions of the deep,

¹The word here translated *twins* is doubtful. It may mean the weapon with which Tiamat was cut in twain. If the reading *salme* be correct, it means the constellation *Gemini*, and the sense would be that the two halves into which she was cut were as equal as if they had been twins.

A palace like these he erected Esara (the House of Assembly).¹
 The palace Esara, which he had built as Heaven,
 To Anu, Bel, and Ea, gave he as a city to dwell in.

[END OF THE FOURTH TABLET.]

Tablet Five.

- He made the mansions for the great gods
 As stars like unto them ; he fixed the constellations.
 He ordained the year, appointed the signs of the Zodiac,
 Twelve months with stars, to each three, he assigned.
 5. When the days of the year he had fixed by the stars,
 He established [planet] Jupiter's mansion, to mark their boundary,
 That none of them² should err, nor go astray,
 Bel's and Ea's mansions he assigned near him (Jupiter).
 Then he opened doors on either side,
 10. He fastened a lock on the left and on the right.
 In the middle of the heavens he placed the Zenith.
 The moon god he created, that he might be ruler of the night,
 He ordained him to be nocturnal, for determining the time,
 Month by month he formed him as full moon :
 15. "At the beginning of the month, whenever the evening falls,
 With horns thou shalt be bright, to be a sign in the sky.
 On the seventh day thy orb shall be [ha]lf,
 Be right-angled on the [Sa]bbath, at thy [fi]rst half,
 When at the setting of the sun on the horizon thou [risest],
 20. Thou shalt in opposition³ [on the fourteenth] beam in full brightness.
 [From the fifteenth day of the month] approach the course of the sun,
 [On the twenty-first] stand at right angles to the sun a second time
 [After the twenty-second] seek the sun's path,
 [On the twenty-eighth] descend and pronounce judgement !

What follows is broken ; it contained the remainder of the story of the creation of the heavenly bodies ; and probably also the creation of the dry land and the sea.

The loss of this tablet is the more to be regretted as it must have related the creation of plants and animals, which is briefly alluded to in the next tablet.

[END OF TABLET FIVE.]

¹ Esara, i. e., the "house of assembly," corresponds to the Hebrew **הר מזבח** "mount of the assembly," viz., of the gods (Isaiah xiv. 13), also called "the holy mountain of God" (Ezekiel xxviii. 14).

² Viz., the days.

³ In opposition to the sun.

Tablet Six is entirely destroyed, with the exception of a few words:

"Of the gods when he heard,"

Tablet Seven.

(It is not certain whether the fragment of the so-called Seventh Tablet belongs to this creation story or not.)

Of yore when the gods all together formed [the world],
 They created [the heavens], they established [the earth],
 They brought forth animated [beings] . . .
 Cattle of the fields, beasts of the fields, and creeping things [of the fields],
 5 to the animate beings . . .
 with living beings they [filled] the city,
 . . . All living beings, all creatures . . .
 in my whole family . . .
 Then the god Nin-igi-azag [created] two small . . .
 Among the tot[ality] of living beings he made them glor[ious.]

Another fragment contains the praise of Marduk. (The beginning is broken.)

[God Zi . . . they called him (i. e., Marduk) in the second place,
 He who establishes
 Their ways
 Not shall be forgotten among men [his glorious deeds]

5. God Zi-azag they called him in the third place who works purification,
 The god of gentle inspiration the lord granting prayers and mercies,
 He who brings forth in fulness, who creates abundance,
 He who makes plentiful, that which is little,
 Whose mild breath we breathe [even] in great tribulation :
 10. May the people proclaim and glorify and may they pay homage to him!

As god Mir-azag in the fourth place, the world should praise him!
 Lord of pure conjuration, who quickens the dead,
 Who unto the conquered gods showed his mercies,
 The yoke, imposed upon the gods, his enemies, he took away,
 15. Who in their place created human beings,
 Who, full of mercy, to quicken, possesses the power :
 May be established, may not be broken, this word of him
 In the mouth of the blackheads, whom his hands have created !

God Tu-azag in the fifth place was the magic word in their mouth :
 20. He who through pure conjurations eradicates all evil ones.
 God Sa-zu, he who knoweth the heart of the gods; he who looketh into the soul;

- He who evil-doers, not alloweth to escape
 He who convenes the council of the gods, he who [delighteth] their hearts,
 He who subdues the unruly
 25. He who makes right conquer
 He who breaks obstinacy
 God Zi-si; he who sends [forth the storm]
 He who makes sweep by the dust-whirls
 God Sug-kur in the sixth place : he who exterminates [the enemy]
 30. He who their conspiracies [frustrates]
 He who crushes [all] evil-doers

Here the tablet is broken off. On the reverse are first a few mutilated lines; then the poem continues:

- . . . a star [which appears in the sky]
 It may be seized
 5. Because he split up the monster Tiamat
 His name be Nibiru, he who stands in the center
 To the stars of the heavens he shall ordain their orbits,
 Like sheep he should pasture the gods all together !
 He should conquer Tiamat, He should press her hard,
 10. For all future generations,¹ for the latest of days,
 He should take her without [ransom] remove her from all the ages.
 Because he has created the earth, has formed the dry land,
 The title "Lord of the Lands" gave him his lordly father,
 The names of all the celestial gods he was installed with.
 15. Ea heard this, and his heart grew joyful,
 Because to his son these glorious names were given :
 "He, like myself, shall be called Ea,
 Of all my most binding commands altogether he shall be a herald,
 Of all my behests, he shall be a mediator !"
 20. After having given him the fifty names of the great gods,
 They gave him fifty more names, they increased his power.
 Such things the magistrate² should mark and proclaim it,
 The wise one, the sage, should take it to heart likewise ;

¹ It seems that though the combat between Tiamat and Bel took place in the beginning before heaven and earth was created, that the battle is an event which must be renewed constantly. Perhaps the annual inundations of Babylonia were regarded as a repetition of the struggle; and then, Tiamat and her host stood for everything evil.

² This line exhorts the magistrate, i. e., worldly authorities, to mark and proclaim the glory of Marduk, while the next following line addresses the priest.

- The father should tell it to his son, and inculcate it,
 25. The shepherd guardian (the king) should open his ear,
 That his heart may rejoice in the Lord of the gods, in Marduk
 That his land should prosper, and he himself be preserved!
 For established is his [Marduk's] word, valid is his command,
 His decision cannot be altered, by any one of the gods.
 30. If his eye is angry, and if he does not turn back,
 From his anger and wrath no god is his equal.
 He is long-suffering
 Sin and crime [he abhorreth]

(The rest is broken off.)

Another creation story written in two languages, Sumero-Akkadian and Semitic-Babylonian, is important, because, like the Bible, it omits Bel's fight with Tiamat and is simpler as well as shorter. It reads as follows:

Obverse.

- "Incantation: The holy house, the house of the gods, in a holy place had not yet been made,
 No plant had been brought forth, no tree had been created,
 No brick had been laid, no beam had been shaped,
 No house had been built, no city constructed,
 5. No city had been built, no dwelling made;
 Nippur had not been built, E-kura¹ had not been constructed;
 Erech had not been built, E-ana² had not been constructed;
 The Abyss had not been made, Eridu³ had not been constructed.
 The holy house, the house of the gods, its seat had not yet been made,
 10. The whole of the lands were sea.
 Then within the sea there originated a stream
 In that day Eridu was made, E-sagila was constructed,
 E-[sag]ila which the god Lugal-du-azaga⁴ had founded within the abyss.⁵

¹ Bel's Temple in Nippur.

² The name of the Istar temple in the city of Erech (the modern Warka).

³ [Now Abu-Shahrein. In the earlier days of its history Eridu was on the shore of the Persian Gulf. The text refers to a sort of heavenly Eridu which corresponded to the earthly one. The heavenly Eridu must have been a reflection of Eden.]

⁴ Probably one of the names of god Ea.

⁵ The present version is by Theo. G. Pinches, *Records of the Past*, VI., pp. 109 ff., revised by a comparison with the translation of Professor Zimmern.

The reverse of the tablet contains a blessing on the city of E-zida, which reads as follows :

Reverse.

"

 May thy supreme messenger, Pap-Sukal, counsel the gods ;
 Nin-akha-kudu, daughter of Ea,
 5. May she make thee glorious with a glorious remedy ;
 May she make thee pure with pure fire.
 With the glorious pure fountain of the abyss purify thou the place of thy path !
 By the incantation of Merodach, king of the host of heaven and earth,
 May the abundance of the world descend into thy midst !
 10. May thy command be accomplished in time to come !
 O E-zida, the glorious seat, the beloved of Anu and Istar art thou,
 Mayest thou shine like heaven ; mayest thou be glorious like the earth, mayest
 thou shine like the midst of heaven,
 May [the evil spirit] dwell outside of thee ! "

A third account (published by Delitzsch) relates a peculiar version of Merodach's fight with Tiamat. Mankind is said to have been oppressed by the dragon, and Bel drew his picture on the sky as a starry constellation. Thereupon he went to meet him in combat and acquire a title to kingship.

YAHVEH'S FIGHT WITH THE DRAGON.

The creation story in the first chapter of Genesis omits entirely even the slightest allusion to Yahveh's struggle with the old dragon and her host. Tiamat, the ruler of the deep, is changed into a watery chaos and in the place of a monster being split in twain we have the more prosaic division of the waters. Nevertheless, the myth of Marduk-Yahveh existed among the people of Israel, for there are several unmistakable allusions to it in the Scriptures. The monsters of the deep are called Leviathan, Behemoth, and Rahab,¹ and the passages in which they are mentioned have been diligently collected by Professor Gunkel. We quote some of them.²

¹ The Hebrew *Rahab*, probably corresponds to the Babylonian *rebbu*, a name for Tiamat, mentioned in the shorter account of Bel's fight with the dragon ; but the reading of the word is doubtful still.

² In all the quotations, which are made from the authorised version, the name Yahveh is restored for "the Lord."

Ezekiel in chapter xxxii. compares Pharaoh to the monster of the deep. He says:¹

"Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say unto him, Thou art like a young lion² of the nations, and thou art as a whale in the seas : and thou camest forth with thy rivers, and troubledst the waters with thy feet, and fouledst their rivers. Thus saith the Lord Yahveh : I will therefore spread out my net over thee with a company of many people ; and they shall bring thee up in my net. Then will I leave thee upon the land, I will cast thee forth upon the open field, and will cause all the fowls of the heaven to remain upon thee, and I will fill the beasts of the whole earth with thee. And I will lay thy flesh upon the mountains, and fill the valleys with thy height. I will also water with thy blood the land wherein thou swimmest, even to the mountains ; and the rivers shall be full of thee."

The tale of Yahveh's fight with the monster is such a popular topic that our author is carried away with it. He forgets Pharaoh and speaks of Yahveh's net and the allies of the sea monster, how it was hauled up and cast ashore, how it serves the animals for food, and its blood fills the river.

Another comparison of Israel's enemies to Leviathan is made in a prophecy of Isaiah (xxvii. 1), which reads as follows :

"In that day Yahveh with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent ; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

The same idea is repeated in chapter li. 9-10 :

"Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of Yahveh ;
Awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old.
Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon ?
Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep?"

The monster of the deep is not always represented as dead ; sometimes it is said to be still alive. Yahveh has tamed it and plays with it.³

¹ See also Ezekiel xxix. 3-6.

² Tiamat is represented on the monuments with the head and claws of a lion.

³ In the Bible as well as in the Babylonian tablets, the myth is preserved in a double form ; in some passages we hear of a complete conquest of the dragon, whose body serves to build up the world and whose blood becomes the rivers of the earth, and then again we are told that Yahveh has merely subdued the monster and plays with him, allowing him to rise from time to time. Compare the footnote to the seventh tablet on p. 421.

In the Book of Job Yahveh argues with Job as to his power over mankind and his privilege to deal with Job as he sees fit. We read (xl.):

"Then answered Yahveh unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said,
Gird up thy loins now like a man :
I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

Hast thou an arm like God ?
Or canst thou thunder with a voice like him ?"

Then Yahveh prides himself having "abased Behemoth" and made him "eat grass like an ox" (15). Yet he is a strong beast.

" His bones are as strong pieces of brass ;
His bones are like bars of iron."

Leviathan is the dragon whom Yahveh holds with a hook as an angler does a fish. The monster asked for mercy and Yahveh made a covenant with him. Yahveh says to Job :

" Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook ?
Or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down ?
Canst thou put an hook (i. e., a harpoon) into his nose ?
Or bore his jaw through with a thorn ?
Will he make many supplications unto thee ?
Will he speak soft words unto thee ?
Will he make a covenant with thee ?
Wilt thou take him for a servant forever ?
Wilt thou play with him as with a bird ?
Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens ?¹

Gunkel suggests, from a collection of parallel passages, that Yahveh plays with Leviathan, whom he keeps on a hook as an angler does a fish. He lets him go and pulls him up again, which signifies the rise and fall of the tides.

The following verses (8-10) are badly translated in the authorised version. Gunkel translates them as follows :

"Lay thine hand upon him,
Then thou wilt not again think of battle.

¹ The text of the last word of the line is corrupted. Gunkel translates :

" Will you play with him as with a sparrow
And bind him as a dove for a boy ?"

Then thy assurance will be seen to be deceit.
 Even a god will be cast down at his sight.
 [An angel is afraid] to wake him.
 Who then is able to stand before him ?"¹
 Shall the companions make a banquet of him ?
 Shall they part him among the merchants ?
 Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons ?
 Or his head with fish spears ?"

Leviathan's jaws, like those of Tiamat, are large enough to enter into. Yahveh says :

" Who can open the doors of his face ?
 His teeth are terrible round about."

The general description of the beast is decidedly mythological :

" By his neesings a light doth shine,
 And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.
 Out of his mouth go burning lamps,
 And sparks of fire leap out.
 Out of his nostrils goeth smoke,
 As out of a seething pot or caldron.
 His breath kindleth coals,
 And a flame goeth out of his mouth."

The celestials, as in the fight with Tiamat, fear him and, when exposed to his presence, they are like "sinners," i. e., defiled, or as the authorised version has it, in need of purification :

" When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid :
 By reason of breakings they purify themselves.
 The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold :
 The spear, the dart, nor the habergeon.
 He esteemeth iron as straw,
 And brass as rotten wood.
 The arrow cannot make him flee :
 Slingstones are turned with him into stubble.
 He maketh the deep to boil like a pot :
 He maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.
 Upon earth there is not his like,
 Who is made without fear.

¹ The monster, though according to other passages slain in the beginning of time by Yahveh, is here still supposed to be alive. Cf. footnotes on pp. 421, 424.

He beholdeth all high things :
He is a king over all the children of pride."

As the conquest of Tiamat constituted Bel Marduk's claim to superiority over the other gods, so the conquest of Behemoth and Leviathan is Yahveh's greatest boast; and Yahveh challenges Job, "Can you do the same?"

The poem is grand, judged as a mythological hymn in the style of the Babylonian cosmogony; but it loses all its poetic strength and becomes trivial anthropomorphism if it is to be accepted as a document of monotheistic theology.

The Psalmist celebrates Yahveh's victory over the dragon. He sings (Psalm lxxiv. 12):

" For God is my King of old,
Working salvation in the midst of the earth.
Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength :
Thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.
Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces,
And gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.
Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood :
Thou driedst up mighty rivers.
The day is thine, the night also is thine :
Thou hast prepared the light and the sun.
Thou hast set all the borders of the earth :
Thou hast made summer and winter."

And again (Psalm lxxxix. 5-11):

" The heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Yahveh :
Thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.
For who in the heaven can be compared unto Yahveh ?
Who among the sons of the mighty¹ can be likened unto Yahveh ?
God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints,
And to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.²
O Yahveh God of hosts, who is a strong Yahveh like unto thee ?

¹ The mighty=Elohim, i. e., gods.

² The pen of the priestly redactor is in evidence here. The original idea was obviously that Yahveh is feared in the assembly of the celestials. There would be little glory in the boast that mortal saints fear Yahveh. The idea that there were other gods became objectionable to the monotheist priestly redactor, and so he changed the verse.

Or to thy faithfulness round about thee ?¹
 Thou rulest the raging of the sea :
 When the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.
 Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain ;
 Thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.
 The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine :
 As for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.

The evidence is sufficient to prove Professor Gunkel's contention, and there is no need of making our list of quotations complete.

Professor Gunkel, in summing up his results says concerning the references in the Scriptures to Yahveh's fight with the dragon (pages 85-86):

"One passage alludes to Yahveh's arming himself (Isaiah li. 9); another one describes how the heavens were darkened during the struggle (Ezekiel xxxii. 7). A wrathful speech **נִגְעָן** which must have preceded the combat is presumably preserved in Psalm lxviii. 30.² Yahveh's weapon is the sword (Isaiah xxvii. 1); or the angler's hook and cord (Job xl. 1); or again, the hook³ (Ezekiel xxiv. 4); or the net and noose (Ezekiel xxxii. 3). Behemoth is caught by a snare (Job xl. 24).

"Yahveh crushes **רָהָב** Rahab (Isaiah li. 9); Job xxvi. 12); he breaks **נִצְנָעַן** the heads⁴ of Leviathan (Psalm lxxiv. 14). He takes the dragon from out of the floods and throws him upon the dry land (Psalm lxxiv. 14; Ezekiel xxix. 5 and xxxii. 4), where the monster lies helpless.

"The 'helpers' of the dragon are dispersed **אֵד** (Psalm lxxxix. 11; the same expression occurs in Psalm lxviii. 30). They fall down at his feet **לְמִלְחָמָה** (Job ix. 13). Sometimes their heads, too, are broken (Psalm lxxiv. 13). Clinging to the scales of the dragon, they are hauled up together with him and thrown upon the earth (Ezekiel xxix. 5).

"In all details, the fate of the carcas of the dragon is described. His pride is punished in the Psalm of Solomon ii. 30 ff. Even in death he is disgraced **לְלִילָה** (Isaiah li. 9; Job xxvi. 13; Psalms of Solomon ii. 30; **רְכָא כְּחָלֵל** Psalms lxxxix. 11; **אֲנָגָר** Psalms xliv. 20). The body is not buried (Ezekiel xxix. 5; Psalms of Solomon ii. 31), but is thrown into the desert (Psalms lxxiv. 14; Ezekiel xxix. 5; Ezekiel xxxii. 4), where it is devoured by the beasts (Psalms lxxiv. 14; Ezekiel xxix. 5; Ezekiel xxxii. 6).

"All that is done to the dragon Yahveh did to the ocean. He dried up the sea,

¹ Lord God of Hosts=Yahveh, God Zebaoth.

² Greatly obscured in the authorised version.

³ Which had perhaps better be translated "the harpoon."

⁴ Leviathan is sometimes represented as having several heads.

the waters of the great תְהוֹם Tehom (Isaiah li. 10); he assuaged מִינָן the sea (Job xxvi. 12); he split it פָּרַע (Psalms lxxiv. 13); he broke up brooks and dried up rivers (Psalms lxxiv. 15); he dried the streams (Ezekiel xxx. 12; cf. Jeremiah li. 36), made them flow smoothly as oil (Ezekiel xxxii. 13 ff.); he made the sea brighter than silver (Psalms lxviii. 31).

"According to another version, the dragon is not slain, but only vanquished. Rahab is pacified רָחָב הַמְשֻׁנֶּת (Isaiah xxx. 7). When God caught the dragon, he behaved gently and became a servant of God; now God has him tied by a ring (Job xli. 2). God plays with him (Job xli. 5; Psalms civ. 26). He lies at the bottom of the sea, but must obey God (Amos ix. 3). He could still become dangerous, therefore God has a guard placed over him (Job vii. 12). According to another view, his strength is taken away by a spell רְאֵן, but those beings who (at Yahveh's command) curse him are able to wake him again (Job iii. 8; Job xli. 2).

"In the same terms, Yahveh's power over the billows of the raging sea is described (Psalms lxxxix. 10). They are assuaged שְׁנָה (Psalms lxxxix. 10). The sea is kept under a spell רְאֵן (Jb iii. 8); the spirit of the sea holds the sea tied by a halter (Enoch ix. 16). The bolts of heaven fear him (Job xxvi. 13).

"This compilation shows that the myth was told in many various versions, which proves its popularity. And this is not at all strange, when we consider that the period in which the myth must have been known in Israel, viz., from Amos down to the Psalms of Solomon, comprises more than seven hundred years; and the time during which our references are most frequent, viz., from Ezekiel down, is more than five hundred years."

The applications drawn from these facts are, according to Professor Gunkel, as follows (see page 88):

"Nowhere in the Scriptures that have come down to us the myth of Yahveh's fight with the dragon is told. The collectors of the canon did not incorporate in it all those myths which reminded them too much of paganism. Nevertheless, the way in which the myth is alluded to in all the passages which mention the dragon proves that the subject was well known to the people and very popular. That the myth is missing in the canon may not be regrettable in the interest of the Christian reader, but it is a striking proof that the Old Testament is only a fraction of the ancient religious literature of the Jews.

"The myth was to the Israelites from the beginning a hymn to Yahveh; therefore, the hymns to Yahveh are the place in which the myth of the dragon was cited. A beautiful instance is Psalm lxxxix. Further, the poet who describes the divinity of Yahveh so oppressively awful to man (Job xl. ff.; ix. 13; xxvi. 13; cf. Psalms civ.), and the prophets, both he who terrifies the sinners with the idea of Yahveh's omnipotence (Amos ix.), and he who comforts the people suffering under a foreign yoke (Isaiah li. 9 ff.),—all these refer to Yahveh's power even over the dragon."

In short, Yahveh's fight with the dragon, so full of mythological incidents, was an objectionable topic to the redactors of the Hebrew Scriptures, who were iconoclasts and monotheistic zealots, but the grandeur and heroic tone, the vivid imagery and poetic loftiness of the ancient myth were too powerful to be entirely obliterated; they left unmistakable vestiges in Hebrew literature which could not be removed even from the priestly canon, which, as it were, was an edition made *in usum Delphini*, not for adults, but for children in an age when mythology was still deemed dangerous because it might reintroduce some of the ancient idolatrous beliefs or practices.



According to Berosus, figures of the monsters of the deep could still be seen in the temple of Bel, and it is not improbable that such things were also found in the temple of Yahveh at Jerusalem. There was a molten sea represented in the temple (1 Kings vii. 23), and the seven-armed candle-stick showed at its base the shapes of monsters which cannot be otherwise explained than by the assumption that they represent Leviathan, Behemoth, and Rahab.

THE SEVEN-ARMED CANDLE STICK AS IT APPEARS ON THE ARCH OF TITUS.¹

A comparison of the Babylonian creation epic with the first chapter of Genesis leaves no doubt as to their kinship, and the former, being more ancient, must have served as a source of the latter. In spite of radical changes in the religious conception, based

¹ We are too well acquainted with the ancient artists to doubt their faithfulness in copying their model. Accordingly there is little probability of their having invented these monsters. Further, we know from Josephus (*Antiqu.* III., 6, 7) that the ornaments on the seven arms were as they are here represented, consisting of elliptical balls, pomegranates, lily-petaled flowers and small indented cups.

upon a progress from polytheism to a pure monotheism, the historical connexion between the stories cannot be denied. There is a question only as to the mode of transmission and the causes of the various changes in the different versions, and we may state at once that when scholars speak of the dependence of the Hebrew creation story (as told in Gen. i.) upon some Babylonian cosmogony, they do not mean that a Hebrew author had a Babylonian text before him and changed it according to his notions. The process was presumably very slow and the changes gradual. The aversion to mythology and fairy-tale miracles was congenital in the Hebrew mind from an early period, and the tendency to sobriety seems to have prevailed long before the ruthless redactorship of the priestly code cut out the last remnants of fanciful paganism.

THE TWO HEBREW CREATION STORIES.

Even the oldest commentators of the Bible were aware of the fact that the book of Genesis contains two stories of the creation which are plainly contradictory in several details and have been preserved side by side only on account of the reverence in which the final redaction of the Bible was made. The first report runs from Genesis Chapter i. 1 to Genesis Chapter ii. 3; the second begins (Gen. ii. 4) with the words: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created."

Ezekiel (xxviii. 13-14) describes Eden in analogous but different terms as the mountain of God, full of precious stones, and where the tabrets (?) and pipes (?) are wrought in gold. Like Aralu of the Babylonians, it is supposed to be a mountain and is called the holy mountain of God, covered with "stones of fire."

There is no need of dwelling on the difference in the two Genesis accounts, but it is obvious that the second story must have originated or at least been worked out in a country which was geographically different from the country of the author of the first story, the former being Mesopotamia and the latter Canaan. In the first account water is an element that is plentiful. There is a distinction between the waters above the firmament and those below the firmament, and the story begins with a division between

the two. The chaos of an inundation yields to a separation between the land and the waters, just as in the valley of the two rivers the country becomes inhabitable as soon as, under the influence of the sun, the dry land appears. In the second account, however, water far from being a hostile element is regarded as the cause of vegetation and the beginning of life. The country was a desert until a mist came, and the Lord God caused the rain to fertilise the country.

While it is quite probable that some elements of the second account, too, were imported from Babylon into Canaan, we may be sure that it was acclimated to the country by being adapted to the geographical conditions, and we may therefore call it the Canaanitic report. It may have existed in some form in Canaan long before Moses. The subsequent description of the Garden of Eden shows decided Babylonian traces. The names of the rivers and also the name Eden are still retained in their Chaldaean form, and the story of the tree of life is obviously the Hebrew version of a similar Chaldaean legend. The essential features of the original significance of the story of the tree of life are apparently obliterated. The contrast between the tree of life and the tree of knowledge, though mentioned, is entirely lost sight of, and only the moral of the story is preserved, which attributes the origin of death and the expulsion from Paradise to the eating of the food of some mysterious tree.

Hermann Gunkel, professor of theology in the University of Berlin, has devoted a special book to the investigation of the problems connected with the first chapter of Genesis and has published it under the title, *Schöpfung und Chaos*. He calls attention to the various mythological features which are still left in the Biblical account. The very beginning, which tells of the brooding of the spirit of God over the waters, is an allegory that is entirely un-Jewish, and the term "spirit of God" never again occurs in this sense in the Old Testament. The Hebrews knew only spirits which fall upon man and work miracles in him; but here the spirit is conceived as a brooding bird, the verb being translated in our Bibles simply by "was upon," and in Luther's German translation by *schwebte*. We have here a reminiscence of the world-egg which needs hatching,—an interpretation of the passage which has been

recognised by Wellhausen and other interpreters of the Old Testament. Dillmann (*l. c.*, I., p. 59) says:

"The fundamental point here is the comparison of the Spirit with a bird (Matt. iii. 16), and there might even be in this the glimmering of a distant reference to the world-egg, only that here the sensuous and gross representation is transfigured into a tender thoughtful figure: as the bird over her nest, so the all-penetrating Spirit of God moves over the primeval waters, producing therein, or communicating to them, vital powers, and so rendering creation possible."

The expression, "the spirit of God brooded," is apparently only a reminiscence; for it has changed its significance, and the chaos brooded upon by the spirit and developing the world by affecting it from within, is changed, in the rest of the chapter, into a creation from nothing, which is performed by a transcendent monotheistic God, who by his fiat effects the successive development of the cosmos from without.

The comparison of God (or, in this special passage, the spirit of God) to a mother-bird remained a favorite idea with the Hebrews, even in the days of their rigid monotheism. Some of the most beautiful passages in the Scriptures speak of Yahveh's protecting wings. The author of Deuteronomy (xxxii. 9-12), not without a palpable recollection of the old polytheistic view that made every god have his own nation, says:

"For Yahveh's portion is his people.
Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.
He found him in the desert land
And in the waste howling wilderness.
He lead him about; he instructed him.
He kept him as the apple of his eye.

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest,
Fluttereth over her young,
Spreadeth abroad her wings,
Taketh them, beareth them on her wings:
So Yahveh alone did lead him,
And there was no strange god with him."

And the prophet Malachi, with an allusion to the Egyptian symbol of the deity as a winged solar disc, speaks of Yahveh Ze-

baoth, the ruler of the stars, as "the sun of righteousness with healing in his wings."

The winged solar disk was sacred to Hor, and his deeds of salvation are told in a papyrus which has been published by Nashville,¹ and translated by Brugsch.² The sungod Râ Harmakhis sits in the solar bark, and his son Hor, called Horbehûdti (i. e., Hor the sparrow hawk) confounds and overcomes his father's enemies in the form of a winged solar disk. The papyrus concludes with these lines :

"After this last victory the gods returned to their own country. Harmakhis came in his ship and landed at the Horus Throne (*Tes Her*, Edfû).

"Thoth [the scribe of the gods] spake : 'The darter of rays who came forth from Râ, he conquered the enemies in his form [of a winged sun disc]; from this day he shall be called the Darter of Rays who emergeth from the horizon.'

"Harmakhis spake unto Thoth : 'Set this sun at every place at which I tarry, at the places of the gods in the South Land, at the places of the gods in the North Land, [at the places of the gods] in the Underworld, that it may banish Evil from their vicinity.'

"Thoth set this form at every spot, at every place, how many soever they were, at which any gods or goddesses might be. And this is the winged sun disc which is over the sanctuaries of all gods and goddesses in Egypt, for their sanctuary is also that of Horbehûdti."

Wiedemann in his *Religion of the Ancient Egyptians* adds the following comment :

"Horbehûdti was originally a solar deity, but in the fusion of different cults he came to be represented as subordinate to Râ instead of his equivalent. To him fell the task of conquering the enemies of the Sun, and he accomplished it, traversing the whole of Egypt in company with Râ and always warding off Evil from the king of the gods. It was therefore hoped and believed that he would everywhere and at all times exercise the same beneficent power, and hence the image of the winged sun disc was placed over the entrances to the inner chambers of a temple as well as over its gates, and on stelæ and other objects, as a protection against all harm and especially against destruction.

"Sometimes this emblem is simply a winged sun disc, but we also find it combined with two serpents, one on either side of the disc, which are occasionally crowned with the diadems of Upper and Lower Egypt. They represent the tute-

¹ *Mythe d'Horus*, pls. 12-19.

² *Abhandlungen der Göttinger Akademie*, XIV. (1870).

lary goddesses of the two divisions of the land, whom Horbehûdти had taken with him to the conflict, namely, Nekhebit and Uazit, called by the Greeks Eileithyia and Bûto."

When the Hebrew prophets spoke of "the sun of righteousness with healing (i. e., the power of salvation or redemption from evil) in his wings," they must have thought of God as symbolised by the Egyptian winged sun disc.

* * *

The conception of a female spiritual influence which assisted God in maturing the world was revived at the period of transition between the completion of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament literature and shows its restored influence especially in the Wisdom literature and the Old Testament Apocrypha. There wisdom is represented as the spouse of God,—a divine presence that shapes things and reduces the aboriginal chaos to order. We read that "the Lord of all things himself loved her. For she is privy to the mysteries of the knowledge of God, and a lover of his works."

There is a contradiction between the notion of a world-development by hatching and its sudden appearance at the magic spell of the creative word. But the redactor toned the simile down, so much so that the unsuspecting reader will scarcely notice it.

The Jewish idea of God's creative power, too, has its pagan prototype in the Babylonian cosmogony, where Bel Marduk is endowed by the gods with the power of the magic word, which can call things into existence and make them disappear again.

The idea of a struggling God, who conquers the darkness and the monsters of chaos with great difficulty, has yielded in the account of Genesis to the conception of a Deity who works without effort, simply by giving his commands. Thus Yahveh was conceived by the psalmist, who, in obvious reference to the story of creation, says: "He spake, and it was done."—Psalm xxxiii. 9.

It is noteworthy that according to the Hebrew Genesis the darkness itself has not been created, but is supposed to have existed in the beginning. God created the heaven and the earth, and the darkness was present; and while every work of God is praised

as good, the darkness is mentioned without any such comment. Professor Gunkel says that even here we must recognise a reminiscence of an ancient mythology, apparently of a mythology which worshipped a solar deity. Certain, however, it is, that the idea was not derived from Judaism, whose God is expressed in the words of Deutero-Isaiah, in chapter xlvi. 7, as follows:

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."

Another feature echoing the modes of thought of a more ancient tradition may be discovered in the fact that the herbs and trees of the earth are not made by God, but it is the earth which at the request of God causes them to come forth. We may here be confronted by a last reminiscence of the idea of the earth as a mythological being which bears vegetation; and it is natural that this feature should have been preserved, because it appeals to the immediate experience of man, for we see the earth bring forth fresh flowers and leaves, every spring.

The idea that the sun, moon, and stars are lights which govern day and night is typically Chaldæan. The Chaldæans worshipped the stars as mighty rulers. In the first chapter of Genesis, however, they have lost their significance as deities, and have become governors appointed by God to act as viceroys over the domain of the earth. In Deuteronomy iv. 19, we still find the idea that the nations of the earth are distributed among them, and elsewhere the idea is upheld in the Bible that the stars are divine personages; they are called Elohim, or Gods (Isaiah xxiv. 21,¹ and Psalm lxxxii.²), which was later on weakened under the influence of a more rigorous monotheism into the term "sons of God" (Job

¹ "The hosts of the high ones on high."—Isaiah.

² "In the heavenly assembly, lo! God stands forth,
And the gods there he arraigns."—Verse 1.

"I say: ye are Gods, sons of the Most High are ye all."—Verse 6.

The passages are interesting. Though the stars are addressed as Elohim, the prophet as well as the psalmist prophesies that their rule will come to an end and they must die like mortals.

xxxviii. 7¹) and "stars of God" (Isaiah, chapter xiv. 13²). How deeply ingrained in the minds of the people was this idea of the stars, in spite of being at variance with a rigorous monotheism, appears in the Book of Enoch, chapter 82, where "all the powers of the heavens which turn in their spheres" are described and named.

Though the old expressions, that the sun should rule the day and the moon rule the night, are still preserved, the whole conception of the function of the stars as governors has obviously been changed in the story of the creation as given in the Hebrew Genesis, for even the slightest tinge of star-worship has been removed there, and the old idea that the stars *cause* the different seasons is replaced by the non-committal expression, added in verse 14, that they are intended as mere signs. The idea of the stars as rulers, far from being original with the author of the Hebrew account, is foreign, nay, even hostile, to his conception. He only allowed it to remain in its place where it has now become a mere survival of an ancient astral religion.

The passage in Genesis i. 26 has frequently given offence to Biblical interpreters. God is here understood to say: "Let us create man after our image, like unto us." The plural form has given more trouble to genuine Hebrew scholars than to Christian dogmatists ignorant of the original text; the latter very naturally and ingenuously explaining it as the first indication of the Trinity doctrine. God the Father here addresses God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. Thus the difficulty, in their opinion, is not only surmounted, but we have a half-hidden Scriptural evidence for the truth of the Trinity idea in the Old Testament. That the Christian Trinity doctrine was foreign to the author who wrote these words is, however, obvious to any one who knows a little about Hebrew and the history of the Canon. At present, according to the latest conclusions of textual criticism, such theologians as Gunkel are forced to consider the plural form as an old reminiscence of a polytheistic

¹ "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

² "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God."

source. The redactor perhaps did not dare to change the words, because they were too well known to his readers, and they were words supposed to have been uttered in this very form by God himself.

We must assume here that the original source upon which the author of Genesis drew, described an assemblage of the celestials, such as for instance took place in the Book of Job, in 1 Kings xxii. 19-22, Daniel vii. 10, Isaiah vi, Enoch xiv. 22 ff., Revelation vi; and it will be difficult to interpret the plural form of this as well as of other parallel passages (such as Genesis iii. 22, xi. 7, Isaiah vi. 8) otherwise than as spoken in open council, and as summing up a decision at the conclusion of a conference.

Since the plural form "let us" indicates a reference to other persons, we have good reason to believe that the Genesis account omits that part of the narration in which the council of the gods is mentioned. The same gap is noticeable in Genesis iii. 22 and xi. 7, and the easiest and most obvious explanation is that in all three passages the original situation was either directly described or otherwise obvious to the reader, but was changed on account of a change in the religious views of the Hebrew redactor, who held the polytheistic belief in abhorrence. Passages in which other gods or Elohim are mentioned by the side of Yahveh, even as mere inferiors, were too polytheistic for the rigorous and Puritanic authors of the Old Testament. In the original Chaldaean story of the creation we find other deities assisting the chief God by counsel and active help; but this was so utterly un-Jewish that the Hebrew reviser would not brook it in his version, which is adapted to the idea set forth in Isaiah xliv. 24, that "God made all things, he stretcheth forth the heavens alone, and spread abroad the earth himself."

A consideration of the change which the passages of Genesis i. 26, iii. 22, and xi. 7 underwent, indicates the great age of the original copy, features of which are here still preserved. The same may be true of the passage in Job xxxviii. 7, which informs us that the sons of God, though no longer active helpers in the creation, were present as admiring spectators. The redactor of Genesis,

however, has entirely omitted any mention of the angels, which is additional proof that he would certainly not on his own account have introduced other Elohim in addition to Yahveh; but that he only suffered the plural form to remain in spite of its discrepancy with a tendency of other textual changes.

But the words of God quoted above contain one more remarkable survival of pristine paganism. The text reads: "Let us create man after our image, like unto us." The word for image, *tselem*, means at the same time *idol* and a *skiagraph*, or *silhouette*. The word occurs also in Chaldaean, Syriac, and Arabian, being derived from the root בָּלֶם, which occurs also in Ethiopian and means "to adumbrate, to shadow." The passage, as probably understood by the redactor and as commonly interpreted now, means that man was made after the likeness of God; but the idea of a spiritual likeness of man to God was foreign to the writer of these lines. Man acquires a spiritual likeness to God by eating of the tree of knowledge, as related in the other report Gen. iii. 22. The word *tselem* denotes idols, viz., statues of the gods, in 2 Kings xi. 18, Amos v. 26, Daniel ii. 31 ff. and iii. 1 ff. Accordingly *tselem* of the Elohim must have had a special connotation as to a definite figure, and we shall probably not be mistaken if we interpret its original meaning as that which the Egyptians call *Ka* or double, viz., the external shape of a person in the form of a statue.

The idea of the double, that is, a likeness or image, is a very important notion among the nations that dwelt on the banks of the Nile as well as in Mesopotamia. The soul of man, the *Ba*, according to Egyptian notions, is his consciousness, but the personality or *Ka* of a man is his form; and the preservation of the latter was aimed at in the preservation of the bodily remains, which led to the embalming of mummies and other funeral rites in Egypt. In addition to the preservation of the mummy, the Egyptians made small statues of their dead, so as to preserve the double of a man in case the mummy might be destroyed.

The *tselems* of the gods were regarded with the same reverence that Roman Catholics still feel for the images of their saints. The idea proposed in Genesis i. 26, is that God intends to make man

after the type of his statue ; to use the Egyptian term, after his *Ka* ; or, using the Chaldeo-Syrian term, after his *tselem*, or idol. That this similarity of man to the *Ka* or double of God does not exclude a similarity to his more spiritual features, cannot be denied, and thus it serves in the end the same idea which is to-day expressed by the common interpretation of the verse. But the original meaning was not any spiritual likeness but a bodily resemblance, viz., that man was created after the pattern of the image, i. e., the idol, of the god, after his statue and corporeal shape, which of course was no longer countenanced by our Hebrew redactor, who only suffered the old version to be retained, together with the words, "like unto us," which in the interpretation of the redactor are a simple tautology, but originally meant that this idol of the Elohim was like unto the Elohim themselves.

The idea that man should have been made after a statue of Yahveh is un-Jewish, on account of the Jewish antipathy to idols ; but for that reason the idea that man should have been made after the bodily appearance of God was not deemed an impossibility, for the ancient Hebrews in the periods antedating the prophets thought of Yahveh in the form of a human personality.

We might incidentally remark that it is a natural phase in the history of religion to think of the Deity as being like man, and *vice versa* to think of man as bearing the likeness of the Deity. We know that this stage was reached in Greece in the period of classical antiquity.

The refrain at the end of every day's work, which declares that the work of creation was good, and at least the creation of man very good, savors strongly of anthropomorphism, for it suggests the idea of a possible failure ; as a mechanic, when he has finished a piece of work, scrutinises it to see whether he has done it well, so God contemplates his day's labor and comes to the conclusion that it is satisfactory. Such ideas and suppositions were certainly not intended by the redactor, and so we must not believe that they originated in his own mind. He has scarcely understood the significance of the words, and we have therefore good reason to believe

that like so many other anthropomorphic features of the story of the creation,—he simply left them as he found them.

The work of creation being finished, God enjoins vegetarianism on Adam. It is scarcely probable that the omission of animal food in Genesis i. 29, is accidental. God said: “Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.” The behest is repeated for the animal world, and no word is said that animals should serve as food for man. Whether or not a verse especially forbidding the use of animals as food is omitted, it is difficult to say; but Professor Gunkel believes that we are confronted here with a definite tradition as to the original impropriety of animal food, for Isaiah propounds a similar ideal of general peace on earth that will be the age in which the wolf shall rest by the lamb and the panther by the kid.¹ Then, the lion shall eat grass like the cattle. It is not probable, argues Gunkel, that this description originated in the mind of the prophet as an ideal fiction, and as such it would be marvellously strange; however, this figure of speech would be quite comprehensible if we assumed that the author of Genesis i. utilised for his purpose material furnished by a special tradition. And we can scarcely doubt that we are here confronted with the well-known myth of the Golden Age in which slaughter of every kind was unknown. In fact, we may assume that the myth is better preserved in Isaiah than in the first chapter of Genesis; there it is a poetical description full of depth and ideal warmth, but here reduced to a simple behest of God.

The introduction of the Sabbath is commonly regarded by Bible critics as a later addition, which is assumed to have been introduced by a reviser’s hand in post-exilic times when the sanctity of the Sabbath was urgently insisted upon by the Jewish law.

The argument of the sanctity of the Sabbath is certainly gross anthropomorphism, for it presupposes that God, after the accomplishment of his labors, must have been tired and that he therefore

¹ Isaiah xi. 6–8. Confer Isaiah lxv. 25.

took a rest, which certainly did not agree with the ancient Jewish conception of the Deity. There is little probability that the redactor invented this feature, and we must therefore deem it probable that it existed in the tradition which he utilised. For these reasons the propositions of those critics who believe that the passage referring to the institution of the Sabbath, including Exodus xx. 11, should be regarded as post-exilic, must be rejected. In fact, we cannot doubt that the Sabbath was a very ancient institution in Canaan and must have existed long before the exile.

Summing up all the arguments, Gunkel comes to the conclusion that the first chapter of Genesis is not the poetical conception of a prophet-poet, but it is *the redaction of a tradition*; and that this tradition dates back to the remotest antiquity. We can recognise a number of features which plainly bear the stamp of a mythological cosmogony, the underlying ideas of which were not in harmony with the notions of the redactor.

The redactor of the first chapter of Genesis was a man imbued with the spirit of a Puritanic monotheism. The priestly revisor adapted an originally pagan (i. e., Babylonian) cosmogony to his own idea of creation, based upon a God-conception which for those days was decidedly rationalistic and critical. He was familiar with one or more of the versions related to the Marduk creation myth, and he utilised it for his purpose, but he adapted the myth to his own, more abstract, more Puritanic, more scientific conviction, in order to set forth those features which he deemed worthy of belief, cutting out the fantastic, the mythological, the polytheistic fairy-tale elements. We may for good reasons call him a prophet of God, but far from being poetical he was critical and sober to a fault. Apparently he was in dead earnest, and instead of being endowed with a grand imagination, he used the pruning-knife freely. Thus, the report of Genesis is a simplified account of a grand and animated ancient myth, full of passion, struggle, and dramatic interest. It has become the *résumé* of a week's labor, an inventory of the products of a workshop, colorless, and painted gray in gray. The antique description of nature animated by gods and demons has yielded to a rationalistic reflexion. And the redac-

tor did his work with thoroughness, leaving only a few relics of the ancient work, which now enable us to recognise its original character. These were left simply because either their mythological significance escaped the redactor, or he was so accustomed to the traditional words of the text that he did not see their implications. How natural it was that he took no offence at them may be gathered from the fact that while more than two millenniums have elapsed since the completion of his work, there are still quite a number of theologians in our pulpits to-day who have not as yet discovered these plainly-written characters which underlie the palimpsest of Genesis.

The account of Genesis, as it now stands, is the product of two religions,—the ancient pagan cosmogony of the brooding world-spirit, which causes the world to be evolved from chaos, and the monotheistic fiat as the principle of the origin of the world.

While the work of the redactor has been that of a ruthless iconoclast, and while the source from which he drew is unquestionably pagan, we must not underrate the significance of this step in the history of religion. The preservation of Genesis, and at the same time the consolidation of the religious thought of the Jews, in the compact form known as the canon of the Old Testament, is not a matter of accident, but a product of historical necessity, and exhibits the intrinsic strength of the Jewish mind and its seriousness in religious matters. True, it was rigid, and sometimes barbarously zealous, but for the purpose of leading mankind higher and redeeming them from the old conditions of paganism, a step such as was taken by the redactor of first Genesis was needed; and the literary success which he achieved, rendering the product of his work the accepted doctrine for now almost three thousand years, is sufficient evidence of the significance of his aspirations. But while we recognise the religious significance and earnestness of the redactor of older pagan traditions, we must not forget that the original copy, the cosmology of the Marduk myth itself, also deserves our consideration and high respect. Professor Gunkel, himself a theologian, acknowledges the high merit of the redactor of Genesis, but pays at the same time deserved tribute to the pagan poet of the Marduk

myth. The former was imbued with a deeply religious spirit, but the latter with a sincere love of progressive truth. Gunkel says on page 118 of his work, *Schöpfung und Chaos*:

"The theologian will be wise to treat the Marduk myth too with respect, for no one honors his parents by reviling his grandparents. Nevertheless, we estimate the first chapter of Genesis infinitely higher than that old myth. Our concepts of natural science have changed very much from those offered in the first chapter of Genesis, and the Judaistic supernatural conception of God which is presupposed there, is no longer in conformity with our religious piety, nor can it any longer be regarded as the possibly highest belief. Nevertheless, we insist that we still find in the first chapter of Genesis the God in whom we believe. It is still *our* view, while other cosmogonies have become mere interesting antique curiosities. An historical conception can no longer regard the first chapter of Genesis, as did our fathers, as a monument of a special revelation of God which was given to man; but we can still retain the conviction that in the evolution of the Israelitic religion we are confronted with the dispensation of the living God. And it is the indubitable duty of the religious historian to set forth clearly and unmistakably this conviction whenever treating a height that has been reached in history which opens vistas in all directions. The first chapter of Genesis is such a height; it is a landmark in the history of the world, a monument of God's revelation in Israel."

"Genesis i. is the only complete redaction of the myth which has been preserved in Israel. All other passages in the Bible which treat the same subject are mere allusions, reminiscences, and applications. The reason why no other creation myth has been preserved in Hebrew is obvious. This version of Genesis i. because it was fully imbued with the Jewish spirit and was congenial to Judaism has alone survived all other versions."

Gunkel, I repeat, is a theologian and professor of Old Testament history in the University of Berlin. He has made a specialty of the relationship of the Hebrew records to the Assyrian, and his views are respected as sound among his colleagues.

There is no need to deny the revelation of God in the Bible, but we must open our eyes to the truth that God is omnipresent. He reveals himself not only in Genesis, but also in Shakespeare, Goethe, and Darwin. He is ready to reveal himself wherever living creatures are ready to receive him. Natural law permeates nature in all its parts, and the moral significance of the cosmic order can be grasped by the mind, or by the heart, of every one whose intellectual and moral evolution has attained the proper height. God revealed himself in Israel otherwise than he revealed himself in

Greek art, in Indian philosophy, in Roman law, in Teutonic strength, in Chinese patience. In a sense, every nation in the world is the elect people for a certain purpose, or at least can become elect; and as to the future, those will inherit the blessings of the past who show themselves most worthy.

Gunkel, in appreciation of the scientific character of the priestly account of the hexaëmeron, says in his *Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, p. 108:

"It is no accident that the science of to-day has nothing to say to the creation story in the second chapter of Genesis, but quarrels with the one of the first chapter, for here is spirit of its own spirit."

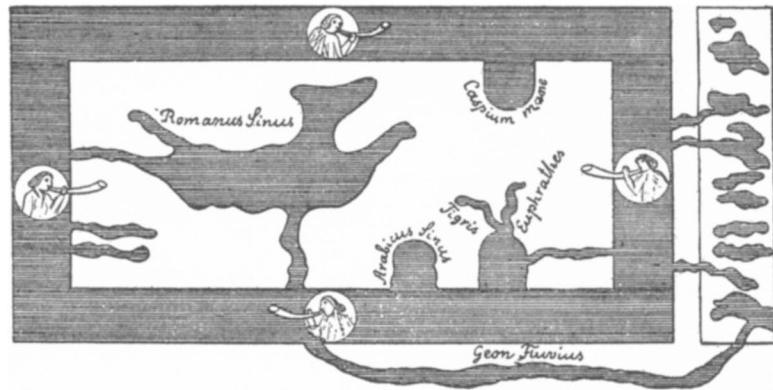
This is true, but for that very reason we cannot agree with Gunkel when he says, that "we still find in the first chapter of Genesis the God in whom we believe. It is still our view." Because it is antiquated science, it is antiquated throughout, while the poetical stories remain poetry and continue to be venerable religious hymns. We have no doubt that there are innumerable men of a religious bent to-day who would in a competitive struggle between the old Babylonian poet of the Marduk myth and the priestly redactor of the first chapter of Hebrew Genesis give the palm of superiority to the former, not only for greater strength, higher sublimity and poetic grandeur, but also for religious depth and its philosophico-scientific comprehension of the cosmological problem.

There is one point, certainly, in which the old pagan traditions have again come in closer contact with modern science and that is the doctrine of immanence. The priestly redactor overshot the mark in his eagerness to establish monotheism by representing God as an extramundane workman who accomplishes his purpose by the magic spell of his creative word. He preserved the ancient view of a development from within as a mere allusion to the spirit brooding over the chaos, and the thought that underlies this simile, implying that in addition to brute matter there is the spirit, i. e., the cosmic order, the influence of natural laws that makes evolution not only possible but even necessary, is not antiquated by monotheism and may serve us as an indication that even the remotest paganism contained valuable germs of truth.

How conservative is mankind! The ideas which underlie the Babylonian myth were not only retained in the Hebrew canon but

were also preserved for many centuries of the Christian era. The fathers of the Christian Church did not accept the Ptolemaic doctrine of the sphericity of the earth, but clung to the conception of the sky as a firmament which divided the waters above and below—an idea which was systematised by the monk Cosmas.

The world-conception according to Cosmas, who had made extensive travels in India and whose book on the shape of the world was accepted as sound by the highest church authorities.¹



THE MAP OF THE EARTH AND PARADISE ACCORDING TO COSMAS.

The idea of the mountain in the middle of the earth is a Babylonian heritage. It is called *Arâlû*, and in cuneiform inscriptions

¹ We here reproduce a sketch of Cosmas' world-picture from Carus Sterne's book *Die allgemeine Weltanschauung*, pp. 25 and 26, and refer our readers to

seems to have originated from the consideration of the difference in the length of the days. In summer the sun circles near the peak, in winter further below, which would cause the nights to become longer and the days shorter.

Beda Venerabilis, who lived 674-735 A. D., and who was one of the most scholarly men of his age, did not change much in the Cosmas world-picture; he drops the belief in the four walls, but still retains the ancient Babylonian notion of a division between the waters above and below the firmament. He says: "The earth lies in the center of the creation, and is the most important part of it. The sky consists of a fine, fiery substance, being vaulted and everywhere of equal distance, like a baldachin spread above the earth. Each day it turns round with incredible velocity, which is somewhat retarded by the resistance of the seven planets above the sun; there are Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, then the sun, and underneath the sun, Venus, Mercury, and the moon. The stars circle in their prescribed courses; those near the north describe the smallest circles. The highest heaven has its peculiar boundary; it harbors the angelic powers which sometimes descend and assuming an ethereal body can attend to human errands and then return. The heaven is cooled with ice-water, lest it be consumed in flames. The lowest heaven is called the firmament, because it divides the waters above from the waters below. The firmament water lies deeper than the heaven of the spirits, but it is above all things corporeal. Some say it will produce a second Deluge, but others believe,—and their view is probably more correct,—that it simply serves to subdue the heat of the fixed stars."

The Babylonian world-view practically retained its hold on mankind until the Copernican system was definitely and finally accepted by the civilised world.

EDITOR.

the Rev. Wm. Weber's quotation on the subject from Prof. John Fiske, who aptly compares it to a Saratoga trunk, in the article on "The Resurrection of Christ," in the present number of *The Monist*, pp. 379-380.